The Woman's Page of The Times-Dispatch

The Farmer's Wife

Said a Richmond woman a week or two ago, discussing questions of interest in regard to farm life: "You may talk as much as you like about the farmer of the future, his business-like basis and his utilization of every possible labor-saving machine, but I go beyond the farmer. I should like to know what is being done, and what is going to be done, for the farmer's wife."

"There is no class of women," she continued, "whose service to humanity is so little recognized, or whose comfort and advantage is so little considered, as this class. The farmer, it is true, attends to the plowing and the reaping, the sowing of the seed and the ingathering of the crops, but he is more and more applying the principles of science to the improvement of such crops, to saving them from injury through adverse weather conditions, to bringing them to full perfection and maturity. This tending to crops takes the farmer out into the open, and it has at least the advantage of variety."

The Within-Doors Province.

"But within doors lies the province of the farmer's wife. She must rise early to have breakfast ready for men whose work calls them early a-field, whose morning duties include the feeding and watering of the teams, ahead of breakfast. This is prefaced on the woman's part by milking time and by the straining and putting away of the milk.

"Then, after breakfast, there are dishes to be washed, rooms to be put in order, churning to be looked after, dinner to be planned and cooked, the table to be set again. In the afternoon, when other women are resting, the farmer's wife is getting her dining room and kitchen to rights. Then she has to get an early and substantial supper against the time when her menfolk, tired and hungry, come home from the fields to enjoy the closing meal of the day.

Brick-Making Without Straw.

"Even if the farmer's wife faced the strenuous problem of her daily round with a kitchen equipment that transformed what had been difficult into comparatively comfortable achievement; even if her domestic help was trained and efficient, as it is scarcely likely to be, she would have to be a woman of unusual executive ability in herself to render her department of farm life anything but drudgery, and monotonous drudgery.

"But when it is remembered how long women in rural districts have been making bricks without straw, how long they have been wasting youth and health and energy in kitchens, destitute of all but the most primitive methods for baking and brewing, they are the human beings for whom my interest is most strongly aroused," concluded the woman advocate of the farmers' wife class, pausing to take breath and looking around on her little audience with an expression that seemed to challenge contradiction.

"And while the American nation," she resumed, "is preaching back-to-the-soil doctrine, and getting out improved farming implements and writing a handy pocket series on scientific agriculture, I should wish some one to get up pictures of model kitchens and dairies and chicken houses. I should like for farmers to be encouraged in having water put into their houses and in building substantial outhouses, especially houses where stock can be kept in winter. I should like public sympathy and attention called to the long-suffering farmer's helpmeet. She should have her chance. If she is sure of help in the devices she needs to lighten her daily labor; if electricity and machinery are associated to come to her deliverance, she will have the time she needs for practical training and can preserve her pretty looks and wear her pretty frocks, transforming her farmer husband into her perpetual sweetheart."

Manners Character Index.

From a "Lesson in Art Taught by Some Womanly Peasants," an interesting feature of the June Craftsmen, the following thoughts are culled:

Eleonora Duse, without beauty, youth, wealth, without even a very wide range of interest, has thought in a straight line out to the heart of truth. She does not go to hospitals, the slums, among the rich o ramong the dissolute, to study types, to imitate clothes and gestures. She studies life, the soul of it. She becomes the soul of the woman she portrays.

Isadora Duncan has no set steps for her many dances. She does not dress in white for Spring. She sees and knows the truth about Spring as the source of all fresh, young joy, and when she dances "you stand by her side and look into the mirror and see the dawn of love and fragrance and goodness. She is a great dancer because she has forgotten convention and tradition and learned to know truth.

How do we mostly set about to achieve beauty nowadays—to be beautiful?

Not at all, but to appear beautiful. Our children are taught to appear graceful by studying steps and gestures; our girls "acquire" manner. They do not express kindness and tenderness and loyalty in such a way that inevitably the manner of doing it must be beautiful. Not at all; manner is to them something quite apart from soul. It symbolizes only the possession of money. It is the guarantee given by fashion that the product is expensive.

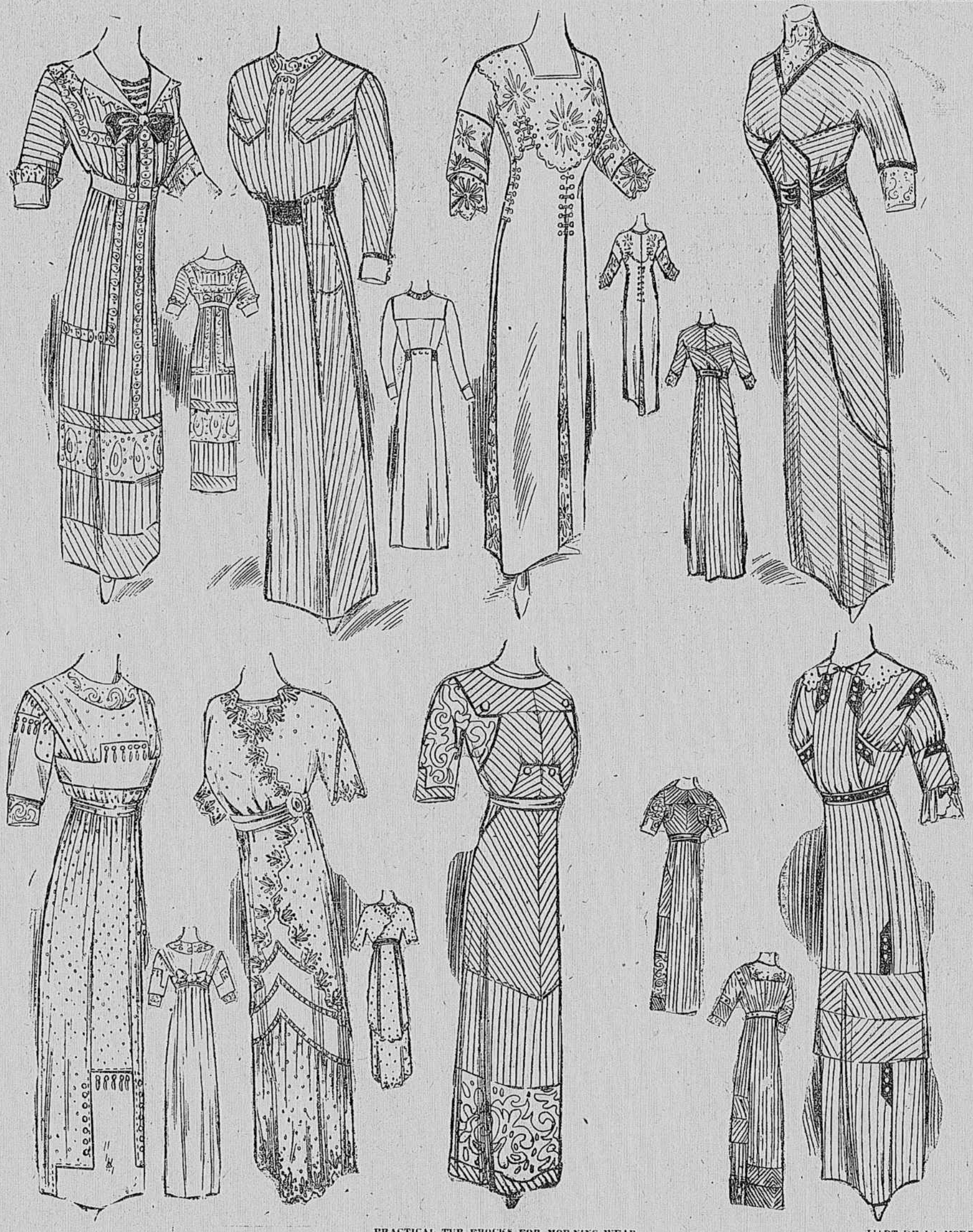
Is it possible to picture a child who is kind and well and merry who would not be charming? Can one imagine a young girl with goodness, reticence, courage, strength, confidence, who would not be graceful and attractive? What is gesture and motion, for human beings but to express what is within, with a view through understanding, to express the best of what is within? Thus, if a gesture is meant to express thought, and no self-consciousness has been created by stupid training, and the thought is beautiful, and the body natural and flexible, then we have the most beautiful manners in the world, that can never be marred unless the thought back of them changes.

Thus manners become, as they should be, an index to character.

The Lyre With a Single String.

In the Tate Gallery in London there is a picture entitled "Hope." Seated on a globe representing the earth is a woman blindfolded.

The water which incloses the globe reaches to her feet. In her hands is a lyre with all the strings broken excepting one. She does not mend the broken chords, she does not wring her hands in helpless regret over opportunities that are gone forever, but continues playing on the single string that is left unbroken.



PRACTICAL TUB FROCKS FOR MORNING WEAR. —L'ART DE LA MODE.

For Bonnie Prince Charlie

The New York Times tells a good story of the late Edward VII. when he was a boy of ten, and of his mother, Queen Victoria, who was staying with Edward at Balmoral Castle, in the Scotch Highlands.

One day the Queen, who was a skilful painter in water colors, was sitting at her easel on the bank of a river beneath a waterfall. Young Edward, playing around her, caught sight of a Highland lad in kilts. The las was making a sand castle and adorning it with sprigs of heather.

The prince advanced to him and asked for whom the sand castle was being built.

"For bonnie Prince Charlie," was the reply of the boy, who stood with his hands on his hips to see the effect of a thistle on the tower of his castle. The lad had no idea of who Edward was.

Edward, however, determined to make it clear that he and not Prince Charlie was to be King some day. He kicked over the sand castle.

The Highland laddie glared at Edward and said:

"Ye'll no dae that again."

It was a challenge. The lad rebuilt his sand castle very deliberately. The prince waited to see the thistle stuck on the tower, then kicked it over as deliberately as it had been built.

"Ye'll no dae that a third time!" challenged the little Scot, beginning to rebuild with even more deliberation.

The Queen had been watching the progress of the affair. She set aside her brush and palette, but said nothing; only watched with a firm studious expression on her maternal face.

A third time her son kicked over the Highland lad's sand castle. No sooner was this done than its kilted builder closed his fists and lowered his head. In another moment the two boys were hammering one another.

The Queen sat there and never interfered by word or act. The little prince presently returned weeping, bruised and bloody-nosed, while the rebel Gael stood apart, himself considerably frayed, waiting to see if any further service were needed in the training of royal children.

To the little prince's plea for speedy justice and vengeance, the motherly Queen replied, as she wiped the blood from the future King's nose with a pocket handkerchief:

"It served you right!"

The Face of Christ.

Zinzendorf, known as the author of more than 2,000 hymns, wrote the one beginning with the lines:

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
My beauty, are, my glorious dress."

It was suggested by a picture in the Dusseldorf gallery, "Ecce Homo," representing Jesus crowned with thorns. From the pathetic face above he turned to the legend beneath: "All this I have done for thee; what has thou done for Me?" The vision and the question led him to adopt for his life motto: "I have but one passion, and that is He, and only He."

A Christ for All.

In an Austrian city there are twelve figures of Christ, each representing a different aspect. The country folk, crossing the bridge to the city in the morning, worship them as they pass.

The stockmen pray to the image of Christ the Shepherd, the artisans to Christ the Carpenter, the market gardeners to Christ the Sower, the ailing and infirm to Christ the Physician, and the fishermen to Christ the Pilot. Enlightened minds will never forget there is but one Christ, and yet to each follower the thought of Him that is born of a special need will always be the one that makes His image in the soul.

Apprenticeship to Difficulty.

According to James T. Fields, there is an apprenticeship to difficulty, which is better for excellence sometimes than years of ease and comfort.

A great musician once said of a promising but passionless young singer who was being educated for the stage: "She sings well, but she lacks something which is everything. If she were married to a tyrant who would maltreat her and break her heart, in six months she would be the greatest singer in Europe."

The Judas Tree.

The blossoms of the Judas tree appear before its leaves, and are a most brilliant crimson. The flowers flaming forth, attract innumerable insects. The bee, for instance, in quest of honey, is drawn to it. But searching the petals for nectar, it imbibes a fatal opiate. Beneath this Judas tree the ground is strewn with the victims of its deadly fascination.

City Neighbors.

I hear their voices through the floor
and wall,
I hear their footsteps passing overhead,
I brush against them in the common
hall,
But never knew the child downstairs
was dead—
Such strangers are my neighbors—till
I saw,
As I passed by, white ribbons on the
door.

—Maud Going, in Success.

She Knew the Author.

At a large dinner given in New York, Mrs. Margaret Bottome, at that time head of the King's Daughters, sat beside a German professor of science. In the course of conversation Mrs. Bottome said:

"The Bible says so and so."

"The Bible," remarked the professor; "you don't believe the Bible!"

"Yes, indeed, I believe it," replied Mrs. Bottome.

"Why, I didn't suppose that any intelligent person to-day believed the Bible!"

"I believe it all," Mrs. Bottome answered. "I know the Author."

What the Critics Saw.

An artist painted a great picture and many people came to see.

"Wonderful!" they exclaimed. "So clever! So original!"

And the critics remarked: "What perfect drawing! What masterful composition! Note how the light and shadows balance! And the coloring—so strong, and yet so full of atmosphere!" And they quarreled as to whether or not it belonged to the impressionist school.

A friend meeting the artist, congratulated him on winning such appreciation.

"Appreciation?" repeated the artist, bitterly. "I painted a vision, a message, and they praise—my technique."

—Ella M. Ware, in Craftsman.

TUB FROCKS

Just Frocks---But So Daintily Fashioned and Finished. Made of Linen, Pique, Duck and Khaki for Morning Wear; of Batiste and Muslin, of Mull and French Nainsook, for Afternoon and Evening.

June flowers and maidens go together, the rainbow coloring, the beauty and grace of the one being matched by the beauty and grace of the other.

Every girl looks her best in frocks made of summer materials, which are calculated to harmonize with youth and freshness, and enhance their natural charm.

Design and Make-Up.

And there is not an excuse to be found for the girl who does not look well, when there is such great variety in choice of fabrics, and such simplicity, which is the prevailing note of well-cut and well-made morning wear, and renders it quite possible for every young woman to be her own designer and the maker-up of her tub frocks.

All morning frocks, even those having a waist and skirt joined at the waist line, are made with some form of the short coat, preferably the simplest form, with the straightest lines. If the home dressmaker will get a good pattern, follow directions carefully, alter seams under the arms if necessary to produce a perfect fit, set her sleeves smoothly into the armhole, adjust her collar and work even buttonholes in her coat; if she has her skirt to hang regularly and smoothly from her waist line to her ankles, and trims it with flat stitched bands; above all, if she sees that her handiwork is thoroughly pressed into shape, she may be as trig and as smart as the young American girl generally aims and desires to be.

Strictly Tailored and Otherwise.

The strictly tailored suits are always in good taste for morning and outdoor wear, and many wearers prefer them to anything else. Biscuit-colored linen with a Norfolk jacket effect in the coat, a black patent leather belt holding it in place, black patent leather ties, a white straw hat with black velvet ribbon trimming and black satin touches on coat collar and cuffs makes a very natty costume for a girl who knows how to individualize it in wear.

In White and Colors.

Never were white lingerie frocks fashioned more daintily, embroidered more profusely, and more lace trimmed than now, heavy and thin laces being frequently used in unique yet attractive combination. Ribbon roses are accessories to white toilets, forming a part of jabots and making a finish for the soft sashes and girdles that are universally worn.

Muslins in the most delicate shades of pink, green, blue and lavender, as fine as silk mull, are used in combination with lace, velvet and satin for elaborate and becoming evening frocks. When the colors in these gowns permit them to be laundered they have to be treated with great care, and ironed without starch. Where velvet and satin combinations occur, muslins must, of course, be dry cleaned.

Rules For Each Day

The three following rules for happiness to be practiced every day in the week, were once given by Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer to a club of unkempt and unprivileged girls. These are the rules:

First—Commit to memory a worthy sentence.

Second—Do something for others.

Third—See something beautiful.

She met awhile after one little girl who declared that she had fulfilled her promise every day; but that one day, when mother was sick, she could not go to the park to see something beautiful and thought she had lost it, but while doing something for others in the way of caring for the baby, she looked out of the attic window of her poor home, and saw a common sparrow.

As she looked at the little fellow, the dark feathers around his throat appearing to her like a smart necktie, she found her vision of the beautiful in what many would consider the most ordinary of all feathered songsters.

Oh, but she arrived in spite of the commonplace which seemed to fetter her, and sunshine came of a dreary day into dreary room, because of the purpose of her soul.—Nehemiah Boydton.

Little Fashion Hints.

A suit of brown linen looks well when made with a smart Eton jacket and trimmed with bands of natural pongee.

A high waistline skirt is very effective worn with a soft blouse and an Eton or short jacket.

THE HOUSEKEEPERS' CLUB

Into Which a Bride-to-Be Was Initiated by Her Sorority Who First Tested Her Abilities and Then Admitted Her to Club Membership.

A contributor to Woman's Home Companion for June has written a cleverly suggestive article regarding the induction of a bride-to-be into a Housekeepers' Club that was formed from a sorority of her most intimate friends.

The noviate for club honors was blindfolded and led into the circle of club members. The president of the club was the person to whom she was first presented. From the president she received a number of kitchen utensils, which she was expected to identify through her sense of touch. After she had successfully stood this test, she took the pledge of membership, and the blindfold being removed she saw the club body sitting around in their aprons and housekeeping gowns.

Passed an Examination.

The newly admitted member passed an examination before the culinary professor of the club, who, after being satisfied at the amount of knowledge displayed conferred upon her, also, a kitchen apron of ample proportions. Attired in this she turned to the mistress of the broom, who crowned her glossy tresses with a dust-cap.

In coming to the notice of the Lady of the Needle and Thread the future bride was required to commit to memory the following proverbs:

Proverbs.

1. A basted bias gathers no plaits.
2. Never look a plaked tuck in the seams.
3. One shir in the mull is worth three in the scrim.
4. A basque is known by the stitches it keeps.
5. You may lead a woman to the machine, but you cannot make her hem.
6. Better is a slashed gore with bangles than a gusset of tulle and ttoniton therewith.
7. Frilled tatting pulls deep.

Lastly she was given a bag of clothespins and directed to take down her washing which had been put up on a clothesline, and included dainty linen gifts from the sisterhood of housekeepers.

I Renounce Them All.

A very little man, says Dr. R. F. Horton, in the Christian Endeavor World, had brought to the altar a very big bride, who, moreover, was attired in purple, and certainly bore a formidable aspect.

Whether the situation affected the bridegroom, or whether in dreamy reminiscence, his mind wandered back to childhood and the catechism when, on the mention of the world and the flesh and the devil, he promised to have nothing to do with them, I cannot say. But sure enough, when I put to him the crucial question, "Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?" the answer came, low, but clear, "I renounce them all!"

It was with some compunction that I reminded him to say, "I will."